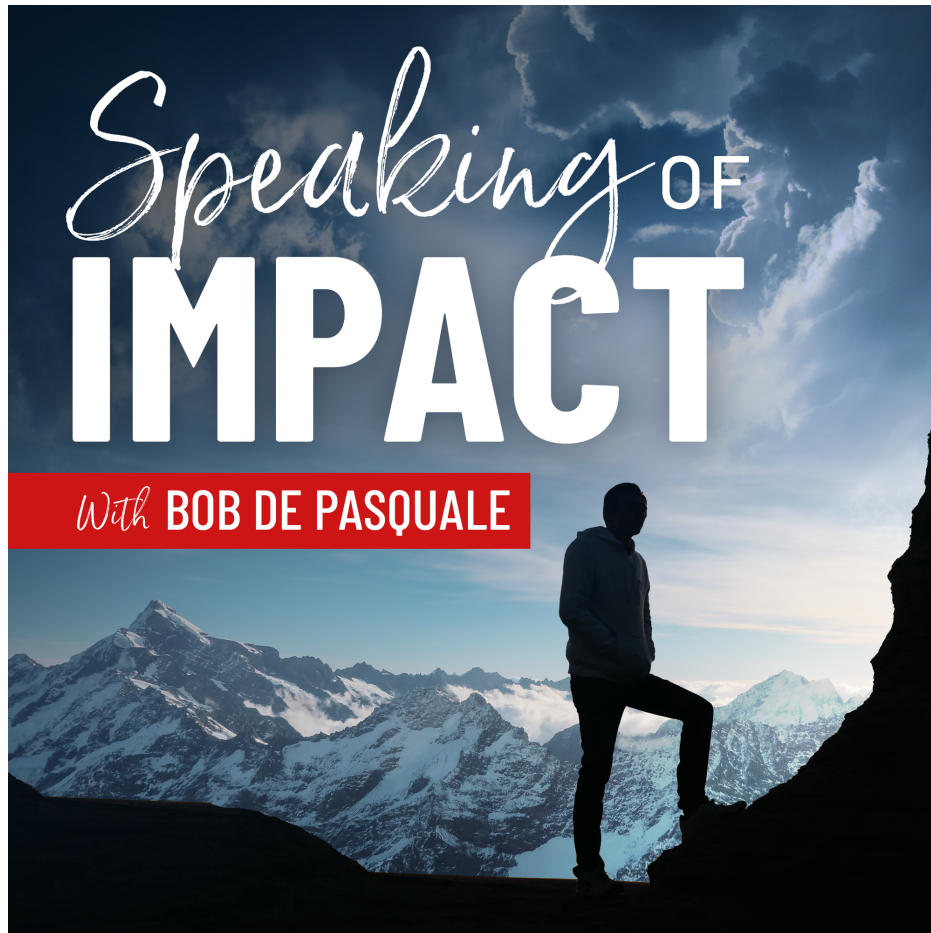


EP #02: Learning Through Imagery with Mayi Lenz



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Bob DePasquale

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Do you feel like there are gifts inside of you ready to burst out? Are you feeling unfulfilled and called to make a difference in a more meaningful way?

Welcome to Speaking of Impact with your host Bob DePasquale. Led by his own unique experiences and curiosity, Bob will inspire you to identify and utilize your gifts in ways that will make more of an impact on the world around you.

And now, here's Bob.

Bob DePasquale: Speaking of impact, a picture is worth a thousand words. Welcome to episode two of Speaking of Impact. Our show today is about imagery. How do pictures tell a story? How does what we see affect what we think? When you were in school, did you ever learn about visual, auditory and kinesthetic learners? I remember talking about that, it must have been, I don't know, third grade, and I always wondered, "We're in school just to learn in general. How are you going to put me in a box and tell me exactly how I like to learn or how I'm supposed to learn?" I always thought it was cool to learn however you could. Read, listen, just taking information any way possible.

Though, our guest on today's show would probably argue for the visual aspect of learning. Mayi Lenz is a photographer who sees something much deeper in her work than just taking pictures. Mayi, as she goes by for short, was born in Nicaragua, and moved to the United States at the age of 14. I know a little bit about Nicaragua. In fact, I've actually been there twice. I participated in Habitat for Humanity Global Village trips. And what an amazing experience, the people there were so

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welcoming, the food was tremendous, and we did some really great work building some houses for people who didn't have a place to live.

But there's no wonder that Mayi is a fun, laughing, interesting type of person, just like the people I met in Nicaragua my couple times there. But anyway, she moved to the States at 14 and really had no choice other than to just adjust and learn a new language. She was raised by her mom and grandmother. And she told me that her grandmother is really her biggest influence. And she talked a lot about how the work that she does through her photography is more than just work, it's artwork. And she can really influence people and make an impact on the people that she works with, and even more that see her artwork displayed in other places. It's amazing one's early life experiences can really shape and form their future self. All right. Let's get to this week's Impact interview.

Welcome, Mayi, to the Speaking of Impact podcast. How are you doing today?

Mayi Lenz: I'm doing great. Thank you for having me.

Bob DePasquale: Sure. I've been super excited to have you on. I know you have quite an interesting story. And we've spent some time together at different groups, and I really wanted to dig in to your thoughts around impact, and how the work that you do every day helps different people. So my first question for you is how did you, you're a photographer, and how did you get into photography? What was it that really made you excited about doing that?

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Mayi Lenz: Well, I have a background in, I was the Executive Director for a nonprofit, and I have a background in web design. I went to school for that, to be a web master. And photography just came by accident. It's not like I had a dream that one day I was going to be a great photographer and I was going to travel the world. That's not one of my stories. But photography seemed more in line with the things that I love doing.

So, as a child, I wanted to be a dancer, an actress, a movie director, I wanted to be in front of people and helping people. And photography has allowed me to do that. In some way, we help people.

Bob DePasquale: Sure. You may have heard the saying a thousand times that a picture is worth a thousand words. I would imagine that's something that holds true for you.

Mayi Lenz: Yes, it does. Not only do I do client work, but I also do personal work. And one of my dreams was to exhibit one day at a gallery. And what I've done, if you take a look on my website, and look at my fine artwork, it's like people somehow tell me that it looks a little different, it's, I would not call it creepy, but it's like dark art. And I think there's beauty in everything. Even in our darkest moments, we always have to find the beauty and the light. I try to find beauty in everything. Whether it's in your darkest moments, or in the light.

Bob DePasquale: Sure. Sure. Well, I'll be the first to admit, I'm one of the least artistic people that I know. But I do, I certainly appreciate, I appreciate the art because of the fact that I'm so unskilled in that area. In fact, my mother's boyfriend's son, if you can follow that lineage, he is a artist in Germany, actually. So, they have an event down in Miami every year called Art Basel, you probably heard

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of that. I've gone down there to experience some of that artwork. And it was almost overwhelming to me. There was just too much going on. My mind was blown. But y'all are so talented.

I mean, you talk about a dark art, if you will, but there's really power in that. I mean, those things that you ... you envision those? How do you come up with an idea behind a powerful picture or something that you've done?

Mayi Lenz:

It depends. And for every artist is different. In my case, I did my first exhibition was on, I called Unborn. And it was my experience with abortion. I know that's a very controversial topic. So I did, I tried to picture different emotions that I was feeling. Let's say, I have one that I have my model, some sort of ... coming out of a tree, the tree fell down, but the tree has deep roots. So, somehow it's a rebirth after that experience, it's rebirth, because you're giving yourself a second chance.

And there's another one, I did another exhibition in regards to my sister passing away with leukemia. So I had a lot of conversations with her, and she will tell me how she felt. There's one in particular that she was telling me like sometimes she felt like her head was coming apart. And one of the pictures that you will see, you can see it on my Instagram as well, it's this girl, which by the way the model was me, so it's a personal, like it's me. Because I wanted to be that person. So it's these hands coming out of the wall, and it's like pulling yourself, like you want to get away, but yourself keeps pushing you back, it's hitting you against the wall.

So you feel like you're against the wall, and you cannot get out, you don't see a way out. Unfortunately, she passed, and my way of expressing that, it was she's free.

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That's she's free from pain. So there's another photograph that there's a door, and the door, it's broken. And she's flying, but she's flying with, what do you call that for the IV? The little strings for the IV to go through?

Bob DePasquale: Like the tube that when they put it into your—

Mayi Lenz: Right. So it's that, and I had butterflies. So instead of the needles, it's the butterflies saying like, "I'm free. I'm going to heaven." If you believe in heaven, you go to heaven, or you go into the universe. However people want to interpret that. But in my case is like, "I'm going to heaven, I'm free." So that's an expression that I thought, and maybe it touches somebody else that is going through the same. Because cancer doesn't just hurt the person that is going through that, and it hurts the families that are left behind.

Bob DePasquale: Wow. That's really, really powerful. Personally, I'm a cancer survivor myself. So when I hear stories like that, it really, really hits home. And I do know how it affects the people around you and the family. I can only imagine what you and your family were going through. This artwork, by the way, we'll have links out in the show notes to your Instagram page, so people can go check it out too. Because this is not a visual medium, so it might be hard to see. But it's almost as if you should pull these up before we even hear you talk about it. So that we can really get your explanation while we're looking at it.

So yeah. Can you talk a little bit more about that? I'm sure that was a tough time. But I think it'd be good to understand what your thoughts were. I'm sure you were probably, to some degree felt somewhat helpless trying to work through that with your sister when she was going through those struggles.

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Mayi Lenz: In regards to that creating the art, or the struggle within everything that was going on?

Bob DePasquale: Well, I mean, I'm sure they're related. But just about how what the impact that it had on you, which ultimately probably inspired you to make the artwork.

Mayi Lenz: Yes. That's very interesting. Because, I guess, creating the art was giving me a chance not to just express myself, but it was a healing process for me. Because I still, my sister passed away three years ago, in March, she turned three years since her passing. And there's a lot of times that I just feel like she's going to call me from the hospital. There were times that I would be there for a whole month. And sometimes I would run to the hospital in the morning, drop off my kids to school, run to the hospital, be at the hospital. And then my mom would go at night, because she works during the day. So there was somebody always there with her.

Sometimes it was really hard, because you are trying to help somebody, and at the same time you're struggling with whatever it's going on with you. So it's two things at the same time. Or various things that us humans go through. So it was hard for me to see her like that, because sometimes she would tell me, "I'm already cured. I'm good." And then I would be like, "I believed." But at the same time I would be like, "Are you sure?" I was always on top of her.

Sometimes, I feel not guilty, but maybe I would feel like I was pushing her too much. Some people, I had one friend that told me, "I hate when people." And she didn't know much about what was going on with me. But she just said because she was talking about, I don't remember what the conversation was, but she was saying, "I hate when

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people push people to eat healthy and when people are dying with cancer." And that hit me, because I was experiencing that. "They should just let people eat whatever they want. They're going to die anyways."

And I'm thinking, "That's a very sorry thing to say. How do you know if they're going to be saved?" Because trying to change the way, their lifestyle, because a lot of the cancers due to the lifestyle that we choose. And the junk that we eat. So I was wrestling with all this. What if I'm pushing too hard? And maybe I should just let her do whatever. But it's funny, because my sister would call me all the time. "I'm going out to eat, and they're telling me, they want me to drink Gatorade. Is this good for me?" So she would always check, she would always send me a text and asking me, "Should I drink this? Or should I eat this?" And I'm like, "Man, after all these years, now she's finally listening to me." Because I'm the oldest.

It was, in that regard, I felt like she's paying attention, and I'm glad that she's changing some of the ways that she eats. It's hard. It's hard because sometimes you don't know whether you're doing the right thing or you're doing the wrong thing. Or you're being, I don't know how to say this, not saying a bad word, but if you're being, how can I use that word? Mean, let's use mean.

Bob DePasquale: Being mean. That's good, mean is good. Or mean is not good, but I get it.

Mayi Lenz: Because I don't know if you're going to have children listening to this podcast.

Bob DePasquale: The family show.

Mayi Lenz: Without being really extremely mean to that person.

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Bob DePasquale: Sure. Because you care about them, and you want the best for them. And sometimes people need a strong influence, you almost have to be mean to get your point across.

Mayi Lenz: Right. And trust me, sometimes I was mean. Like really mean.

Bob DePasquale: But you were the mean older sister.

Mayi Lenz: I guess I was. But sometimes I tell people, "I'm a Sagittarius. I'm a straight shooter. I don't go around. When I want to tell you something, it's because I really care and I want the best for you. It's not because I'm being mean." Sometimes we have to be careful with the words we choose. It's kindness. At the end of the day, if you're going to go out thinking that you're going to offend somebody. Just getting off the bed, you start offending people. People are always trying to, I don't remember this quote from Dr. Wayne Dyer, I don't know if you know about him.

But on one of his podcasts, or one of his books, he said, "If you're going to go around thinking that you're going to offend people, you're going to offend people all the time." And he says this little, he always tells this little story about when he moved ... one day he was at a store, like a Walmart, and he was in line, and this lady asked him, "We're moving from," let's say Kansas or another state. "We're moving to this city, so we want to know how the people are." And he said, "So how are the people where you are?" "People are mean, and they're always saying bad things."

And he's like, "Well, that's exactly what you're going to find here." Another day somebody asked, "Hey, we just

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recently moved, how are people here?" And then he asked, "How are the people in your town, where you live?" And she said, "Everybody is so kind. And always saying good morning. And they're always looking at good things." And then he said, "Well, that's exactly what you're going to find here." And I'm just paraphrasing what he says. But I always remember this story, because no matter where you go, you're going to find what's inside of you.

So, if you're always looking for what's bad and what's wrong with people, you're always going to find that. And if you're always looking for the good in people, that's what you're going to find. No matter where you move, you're always going to find what's inside of you.

Bob DePasquale: Sure. So it's really self-fulfilling, if you believe people are positive, and they're good people, and you look for the positives in them, that's what you're going to find.

Mayi Lenz: Exactly.

Bob DePasquale: Yeah, that's a great lesson. And that was, what was the gentleman's name?

Mayi Lenz: Dr. Wayne Dyer.

Bob DePasquale: Dr. Wayne Dyer. Okay. That'll be noted as well in the ... so we can check it out afterwards and we can look him up. And I'm sure he's got resources for people to read about.

Mayi Lenz: Oh my goodness, he has a lot. He passed away in 2015. I never had the chance to go to his workshops. But he's awesome. He has a lot of great books. I believe his

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podcast still airs, because I always listen to him. I feel like he's still alive. He's a very, very good influence.

Bob DePasquale: That's cool. So switching gears a little bit. And talking about influence. You've talked a little bit about when you were younger and how you dreamed about maybe being an actress, or a dancer, something like that. What other influences from your youth have made a difference in your life now? I found that a lot of people who do really think about others, and want to be helpful and want to make an impact in the world, it usually starts at young age.

Mayi Lenz: My biggest, biggest influence was my grandmother. I was raised by single mothers. My grandmother being one and my mom. My mom is a very kind person. And my grandmother, she was very strong. She was a very strong kind lady. And she was always looking for, she had her own little store, like a convenience store that she built, she built it in the garage. We moved to this big house, and she converted the garage into a little convenience store back in my country.

She started with little things like selling sugar, little fruits. And then she evolved, she started selling other things. Then, it was like a little supermarket. But it was small. It was probably 10 by 12. Or 20 by 20. It wasn't that big. Maybe let's picture putting two cars in there, in the garage.

Bob DePasquale: And you said back in your country, which is where did you grow up?

Mayi Lenz: Nicaragua.

Bob DePasquale: Nicaragua, okay.

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Mayi Lenz: Yes. She was a merchant. She would travel and get more stuff. And she was a hardworking woman. And I always saw that. And when I was little I was like, "One day, I'm going to own my business." I didn't know what that was going to be, whether I was going to be a movie director, and I was going to have my own studio. I didn't know. But I knew that one day that's what I was aspiring to, to do something that I knew that I was going to work for myself. That I was going to do on my own terms, because that's what she was teaching me.

Even if it wasn't directly, that's what I was getting. I want to work on my own terms. I don't want to people telling me what to do. And it's not that I have a problem with that, I just, I like to do everything on my terms. I don't know if that makes sense. So, she was a very hardworking woman, and she was very independent. I don't know, there was something always about her, she gave me this great advice. I was always looking up to her. Everything that she did, that was something that I was aspiring to.

And my mom, she was kind. So I wanted to be a kind person. She is, because she's still alive. My grandmother passed away, but she's a very kind woman. And she's always trying to help people. So I guess get that a little from both of them, from both characters. But growing up, they're my role model. They're my idols, if you want to call that. They're my inspiration.

Bob DePasquale: That's a great story of the people that raised you really. You're living out what they ... whether they knew it or not, but how they raised you. So now, first of all, when did you come to the States?

Mayi Lenz: In 1989. I was 14, I had just turned 14 years old. You know what's funny about that? Because when I first went

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to a school here. That wasn't the best of the schools by then, it was a little crazy. It was a mixed school, meaning that it was mixed with boys and girls. And I went to a Catholic school that I was just for girls. That was a huge change for me. It was really hard. Sometimes I would skip school just to stay in my room. Because I didn't want to go to school. I was terrified. I'm like, "It's a jungle out here." It was crazy. But then, I got used to it. And life was good.

Bob DePasquale: That must have been tough. I mean, at age 14, that's a pretty formative time in a young lady's life. So that must have been tough. A new place, new people.

Mayi Lenz: The culture was different. Even though there was a lot of Hispanics, but the culture was, it was completely different. You have different nationalities. Even though in Spanish you call one thing, let's say one word, and it meant something else in another Spanish-speaking country. And it was that diversity. I was getting used to that.

Bob DePasquale: Yeah. I think when we were at one of our Toastmasters meetings, I think we talked about, I think it was the word fire. There's five, seven different ways to say fire in Spanish.

Mayi Lenz: I think, I don't remember if that was the word, yeah, our Colombians friend had one word for that, and I had another. Cubans have another word. And it was crazy. I'm married to a Cuban, so sometimes it's like, "What did you say? What is that? No. This is what you mean."

Bob DePasquale: That's funny. That's funny. So, for those of you who don't know, I grew up in South Florida, and I practiced Spanish pretty much every day when I was younger. And I felt like I spoke Spanish pretty well. And then I got some bad advice when I went to college. And I came back to

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South Florida. And I'd really forgotten a lot of what I had learned. And I've been trying to work on it, and practice it. And Mayi's been part of my help over the past year or so. But it's been tough. I'm still struggling, but I'm trying. I'm trying. I'm trying to get better.

Mayi Lenz: And you are doing a very good job. Let me tell you. You have improved so much. And I think that when there's a will, there's a way. When you really want to improve, it has to come from you. It's easy for people to say, "I want to change," let's say, "In the fitness world. I want to lose weight. Or I want to gain weight." But just wanting is not going to help you. It's just like me with yoga. I have this thing in my head that I want to do the split, and I want to do the split, and I used to go to a dance when I was little. And I never learned to do the split. And now it's like, "I want to do the split." So I follow this girl online, and she's like, "You have to do this every day."

And then, somehow, I always skip one day. And then I start thinking. How in the world am I going to do the split if I don't do this every single day? So it has to come from you. And I think that's where you're doing a really good job, that's you showing up.

Bob DePasquale: Yeah. You just have to try really. The human mind is an amazing thing when you put it to work.

Mayi Lenz: Yeah.

Bob DePasquale: That's funny. That's funny. Good. So what are some things then that you are super passionate about in your photography and the work that you do? I know there's causes that really are close to home.

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Mayi Lenz: Yes. Well, in my photography, what I like to do most is talk to people. The photography part is not a huge influence in me, it's just the people that I'm touching. What do I mean by that? When I talk to people and they're shy from the camera, and they feel like they're not photogenic. And I'm thinking, it's not that they're not photogenic, it's just that when you learn photography, you learn how to pose people, and you bring the best in them. And what's helping them is not only seeing themselves in the pictures, that they're going to love because we saw something that they don't see in them, and we're trying to show them, "This is how you need to look at yourself. Look at your beauty."

A lot of people think that beauty is just doing Botox, and putting a lot of makeup, and looking like one of the Kardashians. And I honestly don't think, I mean, there's beauty in everything. Not everybody is going to look like Angelina Jolie. I think she's beautiful, but you have to see your beauty. Just looking at a magazine and thinking that, "That's who I want to be." No. You need to look at yourself and see, "This is what I aspire to," when you see yourself in the picture that I just took of yourself.

And they're thinking, "Oh my guacamole, I never thought I would look like that." Because you keep looking outside of yourself. I want to see, like that saying, the grass is greener on the other side of ... what is the saying?

Bob DePasquale: The grass is greener on the other side.

Mayi Lenz: Right. Then you go to the other grass, and it's like, "He has weed too. It's not as green as I thought it was." So you have to stop looking at the other side, and then you have to look within, and you have to fall in love with yourself. And that's what I try to do with my work. I see

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myself and my mentor in a way because that's what I want to express to other people. That's what I want to teach other people, to see themselves as beautiful, as they are. And to stop looking at somebody else's opinion, maybe, of who they are. Because everyone is going to have an opinion.

I remember, I was going with my sister when I was younger, we were going clubbing. And this guy were like, "Oh, girls, how you doing?" And my friend said, "Oh, keep going. Keep going." And he looks at her and he goes, "You're ugly anyway." And I'm thinking, "That's not what he thought a few seconds ago." And I told my friend, "Don't let that put you down. We're going to have fun." Because women, as soon as they tell you something, it's like, "Oh, my god, what if it's true? Is my makeup right? Do I have a pimple?"

You have to be sure about yourself. You have to be in a good place within yourself. So that you just don't let anybody put you down. That's one of the things that I love about the photography, that I get to inspire people, or motivate people to be their best. And usually, I love talking about goals. I usually, when I do a consultation with my clients, that's one of the questions that I ask, "What are your goals?" Because that will help me also to think about the different pictures that I can take for them.

Recently I did a photo shoot with this beautiful girl, that she was telling me, I asked her, "What are your goals in life?" And she was telling me, "Oh, I want." Because I asked her, "Why are you doing this? Why do you want to do this photo shoot?" And she was telling me, "No, because." She was engaged, and she wanted to see

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herself how she is right now. Then she said, "And I'm also into fitness."

And I said, "That's awesome. Do you have classes? Do you get classes or is this just a hobby?" And she said, "No, I've been for a whole year, and I've been thinking that I want to teach. But I don't know." And she started doubting herself. And then I started pushing, "We should do a photo shoot with personal branding, and this." And I gave her all these ideas that she could do. Because I get so excited when I'm talking, that I just lose track of time. But then I just get into it.

And then, she calls me back, and she said, "You know what? I'm going to take your advice. You inspired me, because I want to do the personal branding." Then she gave me all these ideas that she was ... And she was so happy with it. So we went for that, we went for the personal brand instead of whatever it was that she was doing.

So I did a combination of both. But she's so inspired right now. That brings me so much joy. Because now she's not doubting herself much. And she's going to pursue something that she ... she's really been thinking for a whole year. You just need that somebody to push a little for you to do that, that you want to do.

Bob DePasquale: Yeah. Sometimes someone just needs a little push on the right direction. And it sounds to me like your work is more than just, "Hey, show up, wear a suit, or a dress, and I'll take some pictures." There's a lot more behind it.

Mayi Lenz: Yes.

Bob DePasquale: Yeah. Yeah. That's-

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Mayi Lenz: A little bit of psychologies, a little bit of a counselor. A little bit of everything.

Bob DePasquale: You really are. That's way more than just snapping pictures. I think it's like that in a lot of industries these days with technology, it's so easy to do a lot of stuff by yourself, but you really don't get the personal connection. I can take some pretty nice pictures with my camera, and I could frame it really well. And if I'm in the right place and the lighting is good, I might get lucky, and it look like a really nice professional picture. But I don't ... was I really inspired? Did I really develop a relationship with someone? Or did someone else help me think a little bit deeper about it? That's great.

Mayi Lenz: The thing is that not only are you going ... Having the experience with the photographer, it's not something that maybe you're going to do every day, have a professional photographer all the time with you. But if you're in business, if you're a business owner, and you're trying to grow your business. Solopreneurs, we tend to want to do everything, because we want to have control of everything. I was trying to learn makeup, and I'm not a big thing on makeup. I wear hardly any makeup.

So I was trying to learn makeup, because I want to do their makeup, and I want to do their hair. And I want to do their pictures. And I want to clean my studio, and I want to buy different gear. And I want to ... There's so much that goes into a business, that you cannot be all if you want to grow your business. I like more a personal relationship with the person, because I can be there for them.

And where I was going with this point is that yes, well, you can take pictures, but for business owners, if you're trying to grow your business, and you want to do it all, are you

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really growing your business? Because then you have to edit these pictures, then you have to think about, "Okay, I took 100 pictures so that I can get one right." And then you have to think about, "Okay, which picture is right? Let me just post this one." And then you doubt yourself, and you're like, "Let me get that one down, and let me put this one better."

So, there's a lot of things that ... there's a place for everything. You hire a professional photographer for certain things, and then you do your own for other things. You know what I mean? So when it comes to that, I love helping people. "Okay, if it's this for this, I'm going to save you money. Let's just do it yourself, this is the things that you should do yourself." And I give them a list. "Do this, this, this. And this is how you should do it. This is how you can set up your camera, your lighting. But when it comes to this, then that's when I come into place." You know?

Bob DePasquale: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Consultative. Helping them get exactly what they want in the best situation. That's excellent. I really appreciate these stories. You've come from Nicaragua, and you come over here at age 14, and I'm sure the experiences that you've gone through coming over here, and then your sister, and your family. You just have probably such amazing stories to tell and wisdom to share with people throughout that process. It seems like it'd be an enjoyable experience more than just transactional approach to photography.

Mayi Lenz: Yes. You asked me the question about things that are dear to my heart, causes why I do this. I volunteer and I always tell people, "When you want to help people, you have to see beyond yourself." One cause that is really, really dear to my heart is abuse, women and children. Not

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only because I've seen it in my life, people close to me, but I want to help those women. I love mentoring and helping fundraising money. Going to a shelter and seeing those kids there with their mom, because they're running away from an abusive relationship, it's really heartbreaking. Anybody can be in that situation.

I love helping. I always tell people, "If this is not something that you want to do, abused women and children, just find a cause that it's in your heart. Maybe you want to help cancer patients. Maybe you want to help the elderly." There's a lot of old people that are in homes alone. They don't have visits from their families. And we're all going to get there. One day, that could be us. What if our family cannot take care of us when we get to that age?

I have a friend that works in one of those homes and she tells me, "It's heartbreaking to see these old people, and they're so kind. They do activities. But at the end of the day, they don't have their families there. And they miss that." So I tell people, "Just find something that your heart is telling you." I chose abused women and children, and I love seeing the children smile and there are so many beautiful people helping. And just seeing those people and connecting to those people, it's just amazing. It's a great feeling. And it helps you grow as a human being.

Bob DePasquale: Absolutely. Absolutely. So when I speak with people who are solopreneurs, or own their own business, and I feel that they have a greater purpose than just whatever business or line that they're in. I always like to ask them. What is it or how is it that they find, how are they able to make the impact that they want to make in the world? How do they combine that with their professional life? So

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that's my closing question to you is how are you able to mix business with a greater purpose, if you will?

Mayi Lenz: To me, well, to me that's easy. My photography, my purpose is to help women develop powerful confidence about themselves, and the value they bring to the world. And that's on my Instagram account. And you will see that that's, and I'm not excluding men from that. It's just that I am a woman, so I speak from my experiences. Then I'm talking to that woman that it's out there that is probably feeling the same feelings that I had, or that I have, so I speak to that person. Because they say when you speak to everyone, you speak to no one.

So I am speaking to that personal, to that person, I'm sorry, and when I am out there in the community, it's the same thing that I'm bringing from my work to the community, it's the same purpose. Is to help people develop powerful confidence about themselves. Because men have that confidence issue too, but not as bad as women, in my opinion. I might be wrong. I have to look at statistics, but statistics usually say what I'm saying. Maybe it has changed in a couple of years, but I am speaking from experience. From my experience and from the people that around me.

Bob DePasquale: I really like you're saying, it's when you're speaking to everyone, you're really speaking to no one. That's powerful.

Mayi Lenz: Yeah. It's true. It's like you're shouting and nobody's listening. And always like, when you're giving a speech and everybody is interrupting, you're speaking to no one, because everybody is like, "Okay, nobody is understanding what you're saying, because you're speaking to everyone." You know what I mean? It sounds

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like you're just talking, like blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, and nobody's listening, because you're really not speaking to anyone.

I try to bring that to both, in my personal life and the community. And when I say personal life, it's in my, in the family, outside my family, in my business, and in the community. And I think when you are authentically you, you have to be yourself, you have to be okay with you, then the opinions that everyone else won't matter, because you're doing ... you have to be authentic in everything you do. If I'm going to be one person in my family, and then I'm going to be another person in my career, and I'm going to be another person in the community. It's like, "Okay, which personality am I portraying?" You get confused, like you're not doing anything for yourself and for the world. Because you're just all over the place.

So, to answer your question, I try to be myself as much as I can. Whatever that means to anybody, it's not that I don't care, I do care, but I want to be myself. Because if I'm funny, I think I'm funny sometimes, and I cannot be that when I'm photographing somebody, if I have to be, okay, I'm shooting, let's say, a lawyer, and I have to be serious all the time, and cannot be myself, that's going to show in my work. It's going to show, it doesn't matter, it's just going to show. It's not like I'm having a bad picture day.

In the schools, bad picture day. It's just that I wasn't being myself. And in the community, if you're not being yourself, you're just trying to be liked, and you're not being yourself, you're not giving your gift to those people. We all have our own gift to give to people. And if you're not being

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yourself, then you're just being fake. So, I tie everything together. I'm myself at home, sometimes they tell me that I talk too much. And I am myself when I'm taking pictures. So the same person that talks a lot at home is the same person that you're going to see when I'm doing your pictures, and it's the same person that you're going to see when I'm out there in the community.

Because at the end of the day, it's all about giving your love. Whether people believe you or not, that's irrelevant. You have to be yourself.

Bob DePasquale: Yeah, that authenticity is really, really valuable. I certainly appreciate that. And I really appreciate you coming on Speaking of Impact and sharing this message with us. So how can people check out your photography, what's your Instagram feed so we can see your work?

Mayi Lenz: It's very easy, the same everywhere, except my website. My website is Mayi Lenz, M-A-Y-I-L-E-N-Z.com. And my Instagram is MayiLenzphotography, Facebook same way, MayiLenzphotography.

Bob DePasquale: So we'll go ... That stuff will also be out in the show notes so we can link directly to it. Mayi, once again, I really appreciate you coming and sharing these stories. Thank you so much for being on Speaking of Impact.

Mayi Lenz: Thank you so much for having me.

Bob DePasquale: Well, that was a great start for Speaking of Impact. I know that I have no photographic skills whatsoever. Yes, my wife, she'll tell you that any vacation that we ever go on never saved the pictures that I took. So I knew that when I spoke with Mayi that I was probably not going to know the right questions to ask about photography, but as

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you can see, it's really not about photography, it's more about the impact that she has in those people that she works with and making them feel great about themselves, and comfortable, and pretty, and happy and handsome.

If you check out her work on her Instagram page, or even on her website, you'll be able to see what she was talking about. She referenced it as dark, and it's probably the right word, but I don't even think it really does it justice on how she works like that. And what a cool story coming out from Nicaragua and making a new home and ultimately starting her dream business. I also like how she said, "When you're speaking to everyone, you're speaking to one." And also about authenticity and how important that is in our lives.

So that'll do it for episode two of Speaking of Impact. I want to remind you all to check the website Bobdepasquale.com where you can pick a free copy of The Initiatives for Impact. Post those around, places that you a lot or spend time at work or at home so you can think of ways to help other people at all times, and really live out your impact that you can make.

Thanks again for checking us out. See the blog for some more detailed conversations on these topics, and we'll see next time on Speaking of Impact. See you.

Thanks for listening today. If you'd like to connect with Bob, visit bobdepasquale.com. Tune in next time for more inspiring stories and remember to like and subscribe so you don't miss an episode.